

Benchmarks

These are the articles published in the January/February/March 1998 issue.

These pages are meant for use as an archive for the University of North Texas publication *Benchmarks*. Many of these files are old and contain information and links to sites that no longer function. This is because, over time, many sites shutdown or change addresses thus voiding all links to them. Please keep in mind that all links may not work as they should.

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Distributed Learning: The Wheels are Turning

By Patrick Pluscht, Distance Education Coordinator
(pluscht@unt.edu)



What an exciting time to be at the University of North Texas! I was brought on board in late September to fill the newly-created position of Distance Education Coordinator and I've barely had a chance to catch my breath from all the activity in distributed learning. I came from the University of Alabama System where I handled the daily administrative tasks of the Intercampus Interactive Telecommunication System (IITS), a state-wide teleconferencing network (www.iits.ua.edu/iits/). After 6 years of operation, the IITS had 25 sites and delivered 50 courses a year to participating institutions. By comparison, in its inaugural semester, UNT has nine courses scheduled via videoconference; by January, UNT will have five on-campus and three off-campus videoconferencing classrooms. It's amazing the speed at which the UNT distributed learning initiative has been mobilized.

Distributed Learning

For those unfamiliar with the term, distributed learning is defined by [Turner](#) (1):

Distributed learning occurs as a portion of the standard contact hours of a course and is an organized teaching/learning event that occurs outside of the physical presence of the teacher. Distributed learning is technology based and can be either synchronous (occurs at a specific time) or asynchronous (occurs at various times). The foundation of distributed learning is the matching of instructional strategies, delivery systems and materials to learner characteristics and course content.

There is no predetermined formula for what technologies, if any, to apply to a course. That decision remains with the faculty member. The goal at UNT is to provide the faculty with options for teaching and incentives for using technology.

Distributed Learning Team

The UNT Distance Education Task Force laid the groundwork over the last several years and now the torch has been passed on to the Distributed Learning Team, a new team formed to accomplish three main goals:

1. to design, implement and improve the technical infrastructure for distributive learning
2. to consult with faculty and provide the appropriate resources and training, and
3. to administer the technology effectively. The membership consists of experts from across the campus who are contributing their time and talent to tackle the challenges of distributed learning. The team is led by Dr. Phil Turner, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs for Distance Education, and consists of three subgroups: Technology Infrastructure, Faculty Support and Administration.

Technology Infrastructure

Most of the technical infrastructure for distributive learning is either already in place or being installed as this goes to print. CR Chevli, Computer Systems Manager, and Mark Withers, Media Services Technical Supervisor, form the core of the Technology Infrastructure Committee. CR has designed the video network and Mark has designed the videoconferencing classrooms. Both have worked closely with vendors to make sure that the project comes in on time and under budget. A related article in this issue of Benchmarks, "UNT Expands Options Via Videoconferencing" further describes the current development of UNT's video network. Although videoconferencing is receiving a lot of attention, Web-based computing is also continuing to grow at UNT and Mark Wilcox, Web Administrator, serves on the committee as an expert in [this area](#).

Faculty Support

The Faculty Support Committee serves as a single contact point for faculty interested in using or expanding their use of distributed learning techniques. Faculty are provided with a consultant or "case worker" who will regularly meet with the faculty member, evaluate their course needs, and coordinate the necessary support including instructional design, library reserves, videoconferencing tips, copyright information, web-based training, etc. Representatives from the library (Sue Byron, Sue Parks, Sharon Almquist, Mark Dolive), Academic Computing (Dr. Maurice Leatherbury, Jenny Jopling, Joey Hoffmann, Sharon Marek, Mark Wilcox), the College of Education (Dr. Jim Poirot) and Academic Affairs (Dr. Phil Turner, Patrick Pluscht) meet on a regular basis to discuss faculty support issues and to work collaboratively on individual faculty cases. Training on topics such as PowerPoint, web-authoring and multimedia design is available now through short courses offered by Academic Computing, but the team will introduce a distributed learning curriculum in the spring which Jenny Jopling describes in the related article, "[Distribute and Learn It!](#)"

Administration

The Administration Committee is perhaps the most amorphous branch of the Distributed Learning Team because it draws on the creative talents of UNT's top administrators in the Registrar's Office, Admissions, Marketing, Financial Aid, Budgeting, Legal Counsel, Libraries, Computing and Academic Affairs. These are the people tasked with the hard questions like how do you get approval for distance learning courses? how do we admit and register off-campus students and how do they purchase books or get computer access? As we meet individually with these representatives, the answers we often get are in the vein of "we've never encountered this issue before" followed by "but we'll find a way to make it happen." That's the spirit that makes UNT an exciting place to be right now and I'm glad to be a part of it.

Keeping in Touch

If you are a faculty member considering using distributive learning or you would simply like some more information, please contact me at 565-4936 or check out the Distributed Learning Homepage (www.unt.edu/dlearn/) maintained by Jenny Jopling.

1. Turner, P.M. "Library and information studies education in the age of connectivity." Texas Library Journal, 1996, 72(4), pp. 172-174.



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What Does it All Mean?

By [Claudia Lynch](#), *Benchmarks Editor* (lynch@unt.edu)

Distributed Learning, Distance Education, Distance Learning - what does it all mean? Are these all terms for basically the same thing or is there something that differentiates them from one another. The answer appears to be "yes."

Distributed Learning

According to Dr. Phil Turner (see [footnote](#) in previous article), who is our Associate Vice President for *Distance Education*:

Distributed learning occurs as a portion of the standard contact hours of a course and is an organized teaching/learning event that occurs outside of the physical presence of the teacher. Distributed learning is technology based and can be either synchronous (occurs at a specific time) or asynchronous (occurs at various times). The foundation of distributed learning is the matching of instructional strategies, delivery systems and materials to learner characteristics and course content.

Another definition was found at (<http://www.dl.kent.edu/>):

Distributed Learning is the delivery of a University course or workshop over a distance using computers on a Wide Area Network. Courses delivered over the WAN can utilize desktop video conferencing and shared multimedia applications as well as more traditional network based delivery systems.

Distance Education

The question "What is Distance Education?" is answered by the University of Idaho (<http://www.uidaho.edu/evo/dist1.html>) as follows:

At its most basic level, distance education takes place when a teacher and student(s) are separated by physical distance, and technology (i.e., voice, video, data, and print), often in concert with face-to-face communication, is used to bridge the instructional gap. These types of programs can provide adults with a second chance at a college education, reach those disadvantaged by limited time, distance or physical disability, and update the knowledge base of workers at their places of employment.

The University of Wisconsin provides us with some further definitions of distance education at their Web site

(<http://www.uwex.edu/disted/definition.html>):

Distance Education is defined as a planned teaching/learning experience that uses a wide spectrum of technologies to reach learners at a distance and is designed to encourage learner interaction and certification of learning. - defined by University of Wisconsin-Extension, Continuing Education Extension, Distance Education subgroup

Distance education (or correspondence/home study) is the enrollment and study with an educational institution which provides lesson materials prepared in a sequential and logical order for study by students on their own. When each lesson is completed the student makes available, by fax, mail, or computer, the assigned work for correction, grading, comment, and subject matter guidance by qualified instructors. Corrected assignments are returned to the student, an exchange which provides a personalized student-teacher relationship. - defined by The Distance Education and Training Council (DETIC)

- **Models of Distance Education.** The term distance education represents a variety of educational models that have in common the physical separation of the faculty member and

some or all of the students. - from A Conceptual Planning Tool Developed by the University of Maryland System Institute for Distance Education

Distance Learning

The University of Michigan, Information Technology Division (<http://dmi.oit.itd.umich.edu/reports/DistanceLearn/sect1.html>) provides us with the following definition of distance learning.

- A classic short definition of distance learning or distance education is referenced in a paper by [Grimes](#): "Any formal approach to learning in which the majority of the instruction occurs while the educator and learner are at a distance from each other." Based on this definition, Grimes lists early examples of distance education, such as when Isaac Pittman offered correspondence courses on shorthand in 1840. The University of Wisconsin used the term in its 1892 catalogue of correspondence courses. 1892 is now considered to be the year when distance education was born. In the same paper, Grimes describes how technology has enabled the recent phase of distance education. Thus, he offers a simple, succinct definition for modern distance education: "Taking instruction to the student through technology rather than the student to the instruction." Grimes also paraphrases [Keegan](#) who proposed specific criteria for distance education:
 1. "Separation of the teacher and learner (during at least a majority of the instructional process)."
 2. The influence of an educational organization (including the provision of student evaluation)."
 3. "The use of educational media to unite teacher and learner (and carry course content)."
 4. "The provision of two-way communication (between teacher, tutor, or educational agency and learner)."

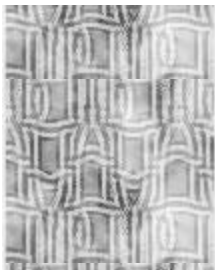
The Definitive Difference?

Virginia Steiner of The Distance Learning Resource Network (DLRN) seems to settle everything when she answers the question "What is Distance Education?" at her Web site (<http://www.fwl.org/edtech/distance.html>) - or does she? According to Steiner, "Distance Education is instructional delivery that does not constrain the student to be physically present in the same location as the instructor. Historically, Distance Education meant correspondence study. Today, audio, video, and computer technologies are more common delivery modes. The term Distance Learning is often interchanged with Distance Education. However, this is inaccurate since institutions/instructors control educational delivery while the student is responsible for learning. In other words, Distance Learning is the result of Distance Education. Another term that has experienced some recent popularity is Distributed Education. This term may represent the trend to utilize a mix of delivery modes for optimal instruction and learning."

For Further Information

The Distance Education Clearing House is chock full of all sorts of useful information (<http://www.uwex.edu/disted/home.html>). Check it out.

1. Grimes, G. "Going the Distance with Technology . . . Happy 100th Anniversary to Distance Education," *etn*, May 1993, pp. 6-8.
2. Keegan, D. *The Foundations of Distance Education*. London: Croom Helm, 1996.



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UNT Expands Options Via Videoconferencing

By Patrick Pluscht, Distance Education Coordinator (pluscht@unt.edu)

The University of North Texas is launching a videoconferencing network designed to offer new teaching and learning options this spring. Nine courses from disciplines including music, engineering technology, library science, sociology, marketing, and applied gerontology are scheduled for delivery via videoconference to classrooms in the Dallas area and across Texas.

Videoconferencing Classrooms

By early January, three off-campus videoconferencing classrooms will be operational in the Dallas area. Sites will be located at the Professional Development Institute (I-635 and Webb Chapel), the LeCroy Center for Educational Technology (Richland College Campus, I-635 and Abrams) and the Dallas Education Center (downtown at 1901 Main Street).

Currently, Chilton Hall and the Engineering Technology Building have videoconferencing capabilities. By early January, two rooms in the Information Science Building and one in the Willis Library will be equipped for videoconferencing. Matthews Hall will follow soon after. The UNT video network will also have connections to TWU, the Health Sciences Center in Fort Worth and regional networks including VIDNET operated by the General Services Commission and TTVN operated by the [Texas A&M System](#).

Videoconferencing provides both on-campus and off-campus students the means to interact with their instructor and each other in real-time via two-way audio and video

In addition, all videoconferencing classrooms are equipped with state-of-the-art educational tools including document cameras, VCRs, large screen television monitors, and computers for multimedia presentations and web-access. To enhance the experience, instructors are encouraged to teach from the off-campus sites back to the UNT campus periodically during the semester. Most courses meet once a week for three hours in the evenings to make them convenient for students who work during the day.

The network will also have the capability to connect to any site in the world that has standards-based videoconferencing equipment. This makes it possible to bring world-class guest speakers into the curriculum for the cost of a long-distance connection. Imagine being able to interact with the foremost expert on a given topic in your classroom. It might not be possible if that expert had to travel to Denton, but technology can erase the miles.

Course Offerings

The spring videoconference offerings demonstrate a diversity of content area as shown in the list below:

- SOCI 4340, Social Psychology and Behavior in the Social Environment, Jennifer Cutrer
- SLIS 4600/5600, Basic Information Resources and Services/Advanced Information and Access Systems, Dr. Samantha Hastings
- SLIS 5300, Management of Information Agencies, Dr. Herman Totten
- EDSP 5150, Introduction to Gifted and Talented, Dr. Tandra Tyler-Wood
- MUET 3020, Popular Music in American Culture, Dr. Tom Sovik
- MKTG 4260/5600, Global Logistics Management, Dr. Ted Farris

AGER 5710, Health Aspects of Human Aging, Dr. Ann Reban

Videoconferencing is not new to UNT. The Engineering Technology Faculty have been pioneers in this area delivering courses to the Comanche Peak Nuclear Power Plant for the last several years as part of a full degree program. The spring offerings include CVET 5400, Construction Contracts, and MFET 5120, Computer-Integrated Manufacturing. After being connected to the UNT video network, the Engineering Technology Department plans to deliver courses simultaneously to Comanche Peak (southwest of the DFW metroplex) and the Plutonium Research Center in Amarillo.

Videoconferencing is only one part of a distributed learning initiative at UNT designed to tailor course offerings to the content area and to improve the range of options for learning.

About the Author

Patrick Pluscht has B.A. and M.A. degrees in Telecommunication and Film from the University of Alabama. He became UNT's first ever Distance Education Coordinator UNT in September 1997. Prior to that he was the Intercampus Interactive Telecommunication (IITS) Coordinator for the University of Alabama System a state-wide teleconferencing network. Patrick brings an array of Distance Education, telecommunications, and audio-video production experience with him to UNT.

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Distribute and Learn It!

By Jenny Jopling, Interactive Learning Consultant (jopling@unt.edu)

Emerging technologies are changing the way we teach at UNT. A major issue regarding this evolution is assistance and training for faculty. I am a consultant on the Distributed Learning Team (see the article, "[Distributed Learning: The Wheels Are Turning](#)") and work with the Interactive Learning Team (ILT) in Academic Computing Services.

A Distributed Learning Curriculum

The ILT's role is to help faculty advance their expertise with teaching technologies which enable distributed learning. To assist with this, I have designed a "Distributed Learning Curriculum" which will be available this spring through Human Resources. Its purpose is to help with integration of technology and teaching through a step by step approach. Upon completion of the curriculum, you will walk away with the experience of producing a finished product to be used as a springboard for distributing your courses effectively.

Classes will include Basic Videoconferencing, PowerPoint Presentations, Web I, II, and III (basic course layout and graphics for syllabi, class notes, and homework pages), Electronic Communications (E-mail, web conferencing, listserv, Web-based testing), and Multimedia Production (audio/video for the Web). The curriculum will be a weekly schedule offering classes one week and open labs the next. Each class will include an assignment specific to your course, and instructors will be available during open lab times to work with you before the next class. You can see the course descriptions and register for a course from the Distributed Learning Web page (<http://www.unt.edu/dlearn>).

The ILT offers consultations for course design, programming, multimedia production, project production, and course distribution. Included on the team are Jenny Jopling (instructional design; program design, graphics), Joey Hoffmann (instructional programming, multimedia production), Mark Wilcox and Dr. Maurice Leatherbury (Web conferencing, Web-based testing), Sharon Marek (Web page layout, programming), Kenn Moffitt (Web databases, Web publishing), and Bahram Paiani (Listserv and Newsgroup Administrator).

We support a multimedia training center in Marquis 218 for faculty to drop by and learn or use different software which includes:

Authoring: Authorware & Director

Graphics: Photoshop, Illustrator, PaintShop Pro, Image Composer, Gif Animator, GifBuilder, Quicktime VR

Video: Premiere

Audio: Soundedit 16; DeckII

Web: FrontPage, Netscape Navigator, Web Conferencing, Question Mark (Web-based testing), Shockwave, RealVideo, RealAudio

For any questions or consultations about distributed learning, please contact me (Jenny Jopling) at 565-4462 or via E-mail jopling@unt.edu. Stop by <http://www.unt.edu/interact> to catch a glimpse of our work.



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The Web and Distributed Learning

By Mark Wilcox, UNT Web Administrator (mewilcox@unt.edu)

The World Wide Web will be a cornerstone of the distributed learning environment at UNT. The Web may not replace the traditional classroom or lecture environment anytime soon but it will enhance it.

We already have several courses that disseminate class information via the Web. You can see a listing at <http://www.unt.edu/teachtech/webcourses.htm>. The variety of information that these course pages provides range from just the course syllabus to the entire class content.

They are just a taste of what the Web and the Web at UNT has to offer for future education endeavors. The near future (e.g. spring - fall 98) will provide more substantial course materials to go along with the course syllabi that is the most prevalent form of distributed learning content. A growing number of professors are beginning to put their existing PowerPoint presentations on the Web in a format that is viewable by any browser. With the introduction of Question Mark software we can now offer on-line testing over the Web (either for self-testing or for class tests). The Web Conferencing System is beginning to get more use and after another facelift that occurred over the Christmas break, it should provide even more functionality.

In the longer term there are a number of technologies that should show up. The most interesting technology is probably streaming media. This includes both audio and video. Streaming media is a new delivery technology made popular by the RealMedia company with their RealAudio and RealVideo products. These products would enable professors to deliver their lectures over the Web instead of through a traditional videoconference. The JAVA programming language is already providing some interesting opportunities at other places on the Net for education and it soon should rear its head here at UNT.

What both professors and students should keep in mind is that the Web and the Internet have good and bad aspects. One bad thing about the Web, at least right now, is that all the multimedia stuff users want can be delivered in other means and with better quality. Also, keeping track of what's real and isn't real on the Net can be a problem. However, the Internet does provide several good options over traditional distributed learning technologies:

- One interface - If you learn your browser, you've learned all the technology you need to know.
- It's ubiquitous - Web browsers are everywhere, at home, at school, at the library, soon you probably can find them in your mall (of course for a price ;-)).
- It's easier to get feedback - If you are watching a videotape of presentation, you often can't contact the person who made the speech, but with the Web and email you can!
- Dynamic/User Controlled - It's possible to make self-learning possible with a few hyperlinks or some other simple coding. This way you can move ahead if you are familiar with the material, while at other times it's easy to go back and review.
- When the professors and students learn to take advantage of the strengths that the Internet offers, in particular the Web and email, then distributed learning will really take off.
- Check out these two Web sites to keep up to date on what's going on with the Web and Distance Learning at UNT:
 - <http://www.unt.edu/dlearn/>
 - <http://courses.unt.edu>



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Multimedia Development Laboratory Open

By Sharon Almquist, Head, Media Library (salmquis@library.unt.edu)

The Multimedia Development Laboratory in the Media Library, room 111, Chilton Hall, is open for business. Its goal is to assist faculty in the development of technology tools for instruction. It may also serve as a training lab for students who would work with the faculty on specific jobs or production techniques. Production will range from slide shows in PowerPoint to full-blown multimedia interactive programs using Authorware to text-and graphics-based courses for distribution on the World Wide Web. Media Library staff will assist faculty in graphics production, design, and programming.

Lab Staffing and Equipment

A new librarian on the Media Library staff, Sue Parks, will be the principal contact for Web-based projects. Sharon Almquist, Head, Media Library, will work with faculty desiring other multimedia solutions.

The lab has two Pentium PCs (running at 166 Mhz and 90 Mhz), a Pentium Pro 200, and a Power Mac as well as slide and flat bed scanners, a CD-ROM burner, laser disc player, VCR, camcorder, digital camera (Apple QuickTake), audiocassette player, and microphones. Software packages in use are: Authorware (3.5 and 4.0), PowerPoint, Photoshop, Sound Blaster, Quicktime, Video for Windows, Visual Reality, Adobe Premiere, Adobe Acrobat, DeBabelizer, and FrontPage 97. Clip art packages, sound effects, and royalty-free music are also available. Additional software solutions are under consideration. The Lab also has manuals and books to help with multimedia projects.

More Information

For more information, you can get in touch with us at 565-4702 or 565-7249. The Lab follows the Fair Use Guidelines for Educational Multimedia. For a copy of the Guidelines contact the Media Library or check out our Web site at: <http://www.library.unt.edu/mmdl/Default.htm>.

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Web Support for Distributed Learning

By Sharon Marek, UNT Web Developer (marek@unt.edu)

I work with the Interactive Learning Team in Academic Computing Services and consult on the Distributed Learning Team. It's exciting to watch the Web evolve, but keeping pace with new developments is a full time job.

I am available for consultation in Web course design, including Web site design, maintenance and publishing, Web conferencing, listservs, and Web-based testing. For more information about what your course can do on UNT's Web, E-mail me (Sharon Marek) at marek@unt.edu or call 565-7296.

1. See the articles [Distribute and Learn It!](#) and [Distributed Learning: The Wheels are Turning](#) for more information about these teams.

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Central Web Calendar

by Sharon Marek, UNT Web Developer

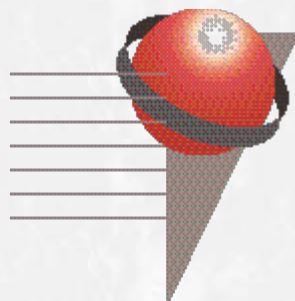
The Central Web Calendar is up! <http://www.unt.edu/calendar/> has events listed by subject, month or day. Check it often to see what's up at UNT. If your organization, college, or department wants to post events to the Central Web Calendar, E-mail me at marek@unt.edu or call 565-7296.

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14th Annual
Conference on
DISTANCE
Teaching and
Learning

Distance Learning '98

August 5-7, 1998
Madison, Wisconsin

The Annual Conference on Distance Teaching and Learning is recognized internationally for the quality and integrity of its program. Each year the conference provides a forum for the exchange of information on distance education and training. The conference addresses the needs of educators, trainers, managers and researchers from throughout the world who are involved in the application of technology to the teaching and learning process and in the planning, administration, and management of distance education programs. For more information visit <http://www.uwex.edu/disted/distanceconf/deconf.html>

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WWW@UNT.EDU

By Mark Wilcox, CWIS Coordinator (mewilcox@unt.edu)

This column covers features and resources available through the University's Campus Wide Information System (CWIS). UNT's Home Page on the World Wide Web can be found at <http://www.unt.edu>.

Things Are Changing

This column marks my first anniversary as the Web Administrator (formerly known as the CWIS Coordinator, otherwise known as the Web guy). In the past year we have created a new look for the central UNT Web site, provided a new Web interface to the UNT Internet Services, helped out with the ASSIST on the Web project and helped push us past the 27,000 page mark. Whew!

The late fall also brought new full-time people on board in the Central Web Support office. They are Sharon Marek and Ken Moffitt. They will be devoting the majority of their time helping faculty & staff developing sites by supporting our tools such as [Netscape Gold/Composer](#) and [Microsoft FrontPage](#). They also will take over teaching the majority of the classes, so that I can focus more on internal developments (e.g. keeping the machines running & attending meetings). We hope to offer more variety of classes including ones on JavaScript, creating graphics for the Web and tricks for Web design.

Two exciting items we now have are our calendar Web site and the new Central Web Support site. The calendar is at <http://www.unt.edu/calendar/>. It's our central place to post the dates and times of events. These events can be anything from any department or recognized student organization, for more information send mail to marek@unt.edu.

The Central Web Support site at <http://www.unt.edu/webinfo/> has resources to help make life a bit easier for Web developers such as tutorials, graphics and reference sheets for our supported editors.

As always let us know how we are doing and anything we can do to help improve the Web at UNT.

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Notable URLs

By [Claudia Lynch](#), *Benchmarks* Editor (lynch@unt.edu)

Changed Links at UNT

Many UNT URLs have changed in the recent past. Following are some of them:

- The **University Union** is now at <http://www.unt.edu/union/>
- The **Computing Center** can now be found at <http://www.unt.edu/ccadmin/>
- The **International Students** page is now on <http://www.unt.edu/isp/>
- The *Daily* is now at <http://www.unt.edu/ntdaily/>
- The **University Planning** Web site is now at <http://www.unt.edu/planning/>
This is the site of the Administrative and Academic Offices as well as the Non-Degree Granting Centers and Institutes contact information.

Other URLs of Interest

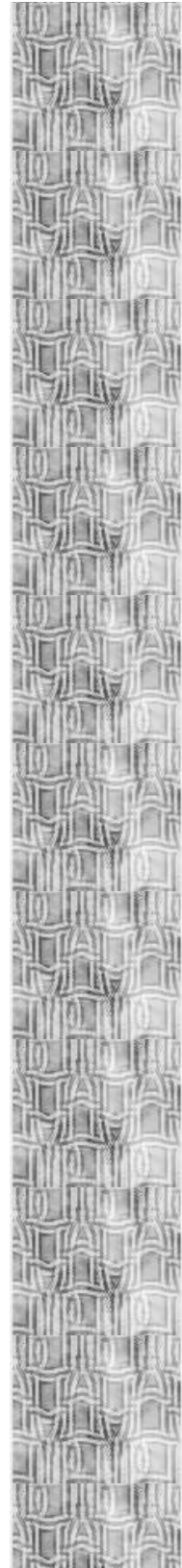
- **UNT Computer Use Policy:** <http://www.unt.edu/ric/policy/compose.htm>
- **UNT Information Security Manual**, a must read for all faculty and staff members: <http://www.unt.edu/ccadmin/security/index.htm>
- **The Love Calculator:** <http://www.xs4all.nl/~kink/love>
- New versions of **F-Prot**, an anti-virus program can be found at: <http://www.unt.edu/virus/Distribution/>
- **Internal Revenue Service** links: <http://www.irs.ustreas.gov/> and <http://www.clearinghouse.net/>
- **Copyright Law** for school teachers and professors: <http://www.nmjc.cc.nm.us/copyrightbay>
- For a quick chuckle, check out **Dave Barry's page of emoticons:** <http://www.randomhouse.com/features/davebarry/emoticon.html>
- For more (p)fun, see the **International Save the Puns Foundation:** <http://www.punpunpun.com>
- Next time you're planning a road trip on the information highway, try stopping first at the **Internet Traffic Report:** <http://www.andovernews.com/trafficreport.html>
- Dallas Observer is now on-line: <http://dallasobserver.com>
- **Tons of Search Engines:** <http://web.superb.net/surfersedge/usasearch.html>
- Take the **Time Poll** and vote on the most important people of the 20th Century: <http://www.pathfinder.com/time/time100poll.html> Many people are voting for Vinton Cerf, who has been called "the father of the Internet." To check up on Cerf, see <http://www.mci.com/mciseach/aboutyou/interests/technology/ontech/cerf.shtml>
- **British Monarchy** Web site: <http://www.royal.gov.uk>

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UNT's Web Site Receives Award

By Mark Wilcox, UNT Web Administrator (mewilcox@unt.edu)

UNT's World Wide Web site has received the Magellan Three Star award (12/10/97). According to the University of North Texas review, our Web site is a "Well-organized site is not just for prospective students of Texas's fourth-largest university, located in Denton, between Dallas and Ft. Worth. It includes everything from courses and faculty to parking regulations, job openings, and intramural sports. <http://www.unt.edu/>" See http://www.mckinley.com/magellan/Reviews/Education/Universities_and_Colleges/American_Institutions/Texas/index.magell

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The Network Connection

By [Dr. Philip Baczewski](#), Associate Director of Academic Computing Services (baczewski@unt.edu)

This column is a continuing feature of Benchmarks intended to present news and information on various aspects of wide area networks.



Keeping yourself safe from the Internet

Franklin Roosevelt said it best: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself...." Some people would have you believe, however, that you should fear the Internet that somehow, having an Internet connection exposes you and your computer to unprecedented peril. This phenomenon evidences itself in the recurring Internet E-mail virus scares that crop up, and is now also exploited by some wily software marketers.

Should we fear the Internet? It is very easy to fear what is unknown, and to many people, the Internet is a vast unknown. Many are now using E-mail in the course of their job or education, but don't really know how the Internet works. Likewise, there has been an equally dramatic rise in the number of home computers subscribing to Internet services. Service providers are making it very easy to connect, but is it safe to use such services?

I think that with a bit of education and reason, we'll see that perhaps the Internet is not as dangerous as it is portrayed to be. Security and privacy concerns should not be ignored, however, a little knowledge can go a long way in helping you protect your interests while utilizing the Internet. A couple of examples will help us understand how some Internet threats are non-existent, while others are blown out of proportion.

Finding a cure for the E-mail virus

It invariably happens. Someone gets an alert about a deadly E-mail virus, and since the mail has been sent some computing company or military address, they decide that it must be true, coming from such an authoritative source, and they forward it to their entire department, or to an entire organization. The message usually goes something like this "If you get any mail with blah blah blah" as the subject, delete it immediately if you read the message, it will erase your hard drive."

Time for a reality check. E-mail messages are text. E-mail is transmitted as text. E-mail messages are processed by your E-mail program as text. Text is simple data one byte per character. Text is like an inert object. You can manipulate it, but by itself, it will take no action. Attachments to E-mail messages can be programs, however, while they are being transmitted over the Internet, they are sent as encoded text. Even if someone sends you E-mail with an attached program, until you direct your E-mail program to decode and save an attachment and you run it as a program, an attachment cannot act on its own. It certainly cannot operate through your E-mail program. Reading an E-mail message might do harm to your psyche, but it can't, on its own, harm your hard drive. (For more information about computer virus myths and hoaxes, see <http://www.kumite.com/myths/>)

That said, you have to remember that once you work with an E-mail attachment outside your E-mail program, you then have to be careful. Microsoft Office documents can contain "Word macro viruses." Programs of undetermined origin might be infected with a computer virus. Both of these

hazards can be guarded against by making sure that you have an up-to-date and working virus protection program.

Cookies and Applets

Cookies and applets these are sweet snacks, right? Not harmful to anything but your waistline, right? Well maybe that's true in the kitchen, but where the Internet is concerned a cookie is information stored by your web browser that can be used by a WWW server to identify your computer has having visited their site before. As we saw in the [Network Connection](#) published in the September/October 1997 *Benchmarks*, cookies have a number of legitimate uses, and when you use the controls available within your web browser, you can easily guard your privacy and prevent unwanted cookies from being set.

Applets are small programs written in a language which makes them easily transmitted over the Internet. The most common language for applets is called Java, and was developed by Sun Microsystems. Microsoft has developed a competing language called ActiveX. Because these programs actually run on your computer via facilities included in your Web browser, they can potentially have access to the files on your hard disk. Fortunately, browsers such as Netscape provide you with control over which applets will be allowed to run on your computer. Netscape Communicator version 4 will even provide you with an estimate of the security risk associated with any particular Java applet (see the Security selection of the Communicator menu in Netscape to get more information about or configure Java security).

The best way to guard against security or privacy breaches from Internet cookies or applets is to become familiar with the controls for these features within your Web browser. The online help can be very useful for learning more about them and about your options for using them or preventing these features from being active. There are also a multitude of books, written for a non-technical audience, about Web access and about specific browsers.

Your Best Defense

Information is your best defense against invasions of your privacy or security. While some enterprising software marketers might sell you a program which claims to guard your computer and files, by using such a program you are putting your trust in that company rather than in your own good sense. If you educate yourself about how your browser works, then software to guard you from the Internet is not necessary.

Keeping your computer programs and data secure is a serious concern, especially if you rely on your computer for important business or personal information. Before you run out and buy software to protect you from the Internet, however, you'd better be sure that you have two important facilities in place and are using them: have backup software for your hard disk and use it on a regular basis; have virus protection software which is active and up-to-date. With these basic tools and some knowledge of the security features of your Web browser, you can guard your own interests and feel much more secure about your Internet use.

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List of the Month

Each month we will highlight one Internet, USENET Special Interest Group (SIG), or similar mailing list.

EDU-ONLINE

<http://www.learnskills.com/edu-online/>

Owner: This list is moderated by the staff of LearningOnline Ltd. The lead moderator is Yoel Ben-Avraham, General Manager and Acting President. MODERATOR@LEARNSKILLS.COM

EDU-ONLINE is an open, moderated discussion list for professionals actively involved in delivering training and education via the Internet. Topics discussed include:

- emerging technologies,
- online training methodologies,
- online curriculum development,
- other aspects of the challenge of exploiting the online medium to deliver quality distance education and training.

To subscribe to the list version, send the command SUBSCRIBE in the SUBJECT line of your mail message to EDU-ONLINE-REQUEST@LOFCOM.COM

To subscribe to the daily digest version, send the command SUBSCRIBE in the SUBJECT line of your mail message to EDU-ONLINE-DIGEST-REQUEST@LOFCOM.COM

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1997-98 Teaching with Technology Grants Announced

By Maurice Leatherbury, Ph.D., Director of Academic Computing Services (leatherb@unt.edu)

Dr. Blaine Brownell, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, announced on November 5, 1997 that he was again funding Teaching with Technology Grants for this academic year. He increased the funding for those grants to a total of \$250,000, in two categories of grants: Distributed Learning grants under which awards of from \$2,500 to \$8,000 will be given and Innovative Teaching grants which will carry awards of from \$10,000 to \$50,000. The purpose of the two categories of grants is to stimulate new methods of teaching with technology at UNT and to provide support for distributed learning (learning done at times and/or locations outside of the physical presence of the instructor.)

Unlike in past years, this years Teaching with Technology grants will have multiple application and funding periods, starting with a deadline for the first Distributed Learning category grant of January 19th , 1998. That category has four application periods at approximately two-month intervals through Summer, 1998. The Innovative Teaching grants have two application submission periods, the first having a deadline of February 2, 1998. Further information on the grants can be found at: <http://www.unt.edu/teachtech/199798rfp.htm>

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Gopher: The End is in Sight

The machine that runs UNT's Gopher site, gopher.unt.edu, will soon be turned off. All the materials residing on the site will have been moved to the Web when this occurs.

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ACS Consulting Policy

By [Dr. Philip Baczewski](#), Associate Director of Academic Computing Services
(baczewski@unt.edu)

It is a general practice of Academic Computing Services to **not** consult on "homework." In other words, if a student is assigned a class project, we will not solve or help solve the problem which is central to that assignment (like writing programming code to implement an algorithm). We **will** help resolve system or technical problems that crop up in the student's completion of an assignment.

Similarly, in research and statistical support, it is our general philosophy and practice to provide the student with the information to complete their own analysis, but to **not** act as a programming service for the student. Also, while we offer advice and suggested analytical methods to students, we make it clear that it is the ultimate responsibility of the student and their major professor to decide if that analytical technique is appropriate to the student's discipline and line of inquiry.

The ACS consulting policy is codified in the *University Policy Manual*, section 3.5 (see, <http://www.unt.edu/irc/policy/acadcon.htm>). Paragraph 3: "In order to facilitate use, therefore, Academic Computing Services will aid individuals to learn the use of the hardware and software facilities available. Under ordinary circumstances Academic Computing Services personnel will not literally do projects for an individual, but will try to provide advice on how to complete the project most efficiently and effectively."

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What Happened?

The November/December 1997 issue of *Benchmarks* was not published, due to a variety of technical difficulties. We apologize for any inconvenience it may have caused you. - Claudia Lynch, *Benchmarks* Editor

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New Mainframe Printer Installed

By George Morrow, ACS Consultant (morrow@cc.admin.unt.edu)

A new mainframe laser printer has been installed in the ISB 133 I/O area. It is an IBM 3900, capable of printing 229 pages per minute. This new printer replaces the two HP 2680A*s (one in the ISB I/O area and one in BA 151). The speed of this new printer should alleviate extended turnaround times for printouts during peak usage times.

Printer Names

The long-standing printer names of "LASER" and "REMOTE1" can still be used to route output to the new mainframe laser printer. The printer names of "BA" and "REMOTE4" are also still valid, however, they will route output to one of two Hewlett-Packard Laserjet 5 printers located in the College of Business Administration I/O) area.

Notable Exceptions

Using this new IBM 3900 printer will be transparent to most users, with two exceptions. LP2X will only be the default print environment for output sent directly from CMS; jobs run and routed to the printer directly from MVS will be printed by default on a "1-up" (LP1X) environment. Those wanting *SECURE* printouts must follow a new procedure to specify secure filing. In CMS, examples of securing output may be found in HELP NEWS or in HELP MVS within the MVSguide menu item. The various environments available and how to designate them are presented in HELP OPER within the LASER menu selection.

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This Space For Sale or Rent

At Eriq Neale's farewell lunch the big joke was to pass on to Eriq the For Rent sign that Billy Barron placed on the Cave door when he left the Computing Center. Eriq put the sign on his office door. I had no idea then that I would apply for and be hired as Eriq's replacement. Well I did and I was.

So today I am writing a few lines to introduce myself. My name is Wil Clark (wilc@unt.edu). I have been involved with UNT Computing in one form or another since 1984. Most recently as General Access Lab Manager for the College of Arts and Sciences. I began working for Academic Computing Services December 1, 1997 as Student Computing Services Manager. So I still have a lab and various other projects that I am learning about daily. Hopefully by mid-semester I will be ready for the semester to begin.

I look forward to the new challenges and opportunities that this position offers. And I have kept the sign just in case...

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Computer-Based Training Available

By [Claudia Lynch](#), *Benchmarks* Editor (lynch@unt.edu)

UNT has acquired a set of computer-based training (CBT) courses for computer end users and information technology professionals. These courses are being hosted by the Libraries at the Web site <http://cbt01.library.unt.edu/>

Topics covered by the licensed courseware include:

- Microsoft Office 97
- Netscape Communicator
- Intro. to Windows 95 and Windows NTInternet concepts and applications
- Networking concepts and technologies
- IntranetWare 4.11 administration
- VisualBasic 5.0
- Oracle database development
- PowerBuilder 5.0
- Windows NT 4.0 administration
- Lotus Notes/Domino development
- Java

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A Summer Course in Statistics

By Eric L. "Skip" Krueger, Ph.D. student, Department of Political Science (regress@gte.net)

Everyone in the Political Science Department was very excited that I was going to be attending the summer course in statistics at the University of Michigan last summer, a trip sponsored in part by the UNT Computing Center. But I must admit to a little doubt - a lot was going on, and I was already beat by July. My wife summed it up the chaos that was my summer: "We just got married and you're leaving me for a month?"

"Well, yeah. So, off I trudged to Ann Arbor, tired, grumpy and completely unprepared for six hours a day of statistics classes. Man, was I wrong. While it's true that I missed my wife, the time passed quickly. The readings were (usually) interesting enough to keep me awake even after six hours of classes. And the faculty - selected from political science, sociology and economics departments across the country for their expertise - were extremely generous with their time. I left perhaps more energized than educated, but it was just what I needed as I started last semester preparing for comps and my dissertation.

A number of professors in Political Science had been to the program, to which any UNT graduate student can apply, or they knew the people who were going to be teaching there, and they were very free with their advice. Despite all the useful advice - advice anyone contemplating attending the program should seek out (not all the teachers were awesome, for example) - I was completely unprepared in some areas, so let me drop just a few tips for those interested.

- My first and best advice is to con a friend - especially one studying in your substantive field - into going with you. During the first week, students introduced themselves to each other - maybe - but I had a hard time finding other political science students. I quickly gave up on finding people interested in international political economy. In 1996, I hear, it was all political scientists - no sociologists or economists. So, the composition changes year to year.

Even after you start meeting people, however, you don't really hang out with them a whole lot. Unlike the European counterpart at the University of Essex, the Michigan program does not house students together in dorms or other campus housing. Not only do students have to find their own housing (no small pain), they are spread all around campus. There is not central bar, restaurant, or lounge where students tend to congregate to relax and socialize. This is particularly strange since all the UNT faculty felt that the social aspects of attending the program were significantly important (after all, I will be working along side some of these people in a couple of years).

- You would also like to be able to share expenses. To attend as a non-credit student (the cheaper way to go) will cost at least \$1,500 plus travel (say, another \$300). You could significantly cut that expense by sharing an apartment with somebody from UNT. (Forget about finding a cheap sublet in Ann Arbor - it's impossible. In fact, finding anything cheap in Ann Arbor is impossible.)
- You should know exactly what you want to learn before you go. In other words, do your homework. Classes there are not like classes at UNT. As a non-credit student (or so-called "visiting scholar") you needn't worry about tests. This lifts a burden off most students (some are taking the classes for credit - poor sods), and it allows them to focus on those aspects of the course that interest them most. But it also means that there are way more things to choose from

than you have time for. Also remember, don't waste precious time and money taking things there that you can get at UNT, whether in your home department or another. I couldn't believe, for example, how many people from big-name schools were sitting in the introductory regression class.

- Finally, bring your own data sets. The program's brochure says no facilities are available for analysis of one's own data. Bull. In fact, most of the teachers encourage you to try out the fancy new techniques you're learning on your own data. Oh, and having a problem getting your data to run? No prob. - just stop by the professor's office any time and he or she will help you fix it. Take some time series data, take some panel data (pooled cross-sectional time series, as we political scientists say), take some count (or duration) data. So the program's computer labs are crowded in the afternoons - so are the ones at UNT. The labs are open late, and there's not much else to do.

For those interested in attending, you can get information from Karl Ho in the UNT Computing Center (kho@unt.edu). Feel free to E-mail any questions to me at regress@gte.net also.

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IRC News

Minutes provided by Sue Ellen Richey, Recording Secretary

IRC Regular Voting Members: Ginny Anderson, Fiscal Affairs; Walter Bowen, Academic Administration; Bill Buntain, Communications Program Group; Carolyn Cunningham, Student Affairs; Paul Dworak, College of Music; Steve Grant, UNT Health Science Center; Don Grose, Libraries; Jenny Jopling, Instruction Program Group; Joneel Harris, Administrative Program Group; Mike Kozak, Faculty Senate; Allen Livingston, Student Association; Steve Miller, Human Resources; Dennis Mueller, Research Program Group; Ramu Muthiah, School of Community Services; Robert Nimocks, Director, Information Technology, UNTHSC; Jim Poirot, College of Education; Don Schol, School of Visual Arts; Kathleen Swigger, College of Arts and Sciences; Neal Tate, University Planning Council; Philip Turner, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs for Distance Education and Dean of the School of Library and Information Resources (Chair, IRC); Chair) Virginia Wheelless, Chancellor; John Windsor, College of Business; **IRC Ex-officio Nonvoting Members:** Jim Curry, Microcomputer Maintenance Shop; Richard Harris, Computing Center; Coy Hoggard, Computing Center; Maurice Leatherbury, Computing Center; Sue Ellen Richey, Computing Center (Recording Secretary); Rondel Stevens, Telecommunications.



October 21, 1997

Distributed Computing Support Management Team

Maurice Leatherbury reported for the Distributed Computing Support Management Team that they are evaluating several different brands of laptops and working with a couple of vendors to set up a program through which laptops can be purchased and maintained for the whole campus. In response to a question from Dick Vedder, Maurice replied that they are specifying removable hard drives for any laptops that will be purchased.

Instruction Program Group

Jenny Jopling reported that in an earlier meeting of the Instruction Program Group, they discussed the classroom access policy because the classroom upgrades that will be occurring will necessitate taking measures to insure the security of those rooms. Don Schol has agreed to contact other institutions to gather information about their classroom access policies. Jenny distributed a memo outlining UT Austin's classroom access policy, for information purposes.

Administrative Program Group

Coy Hoggard reported that the Administrative Program Group has met, at which time Susan Pierce reviewed security issues as well as discussed the time line of some upcoming reports, including the Biennial Operating Plan and the Strategic Plan. Administrative Computing and the Financial Aid Office are implementing a new version of FAMS, with an eye toward having it in production the first week of November.

ManageWise and Video Conferencing

Dr. Turner reported that he and Richard Harris had met with the IR Steering Committee, at which time the Vice Presidents approved the ManageWise proposal that was presented and approved at the September 16th IRC meeting.

Dr. Turner also announced that GTE was awarded the contract on the video conferencing network equipment installation. They are scheduled to begin installation on November 1 with a completion date of December 1, 1997. They are now dealing with issues such as how to handle text book orders, registration and admission off site, as well as how to market the courses. There are already a full slate of courses scheduled at all three sites (PDI, Dallas Education Center, and LaCroy Technology Center), plus some in Lubbock, Houston, and Nacogdoches in Spring of 1998. They have met with the DCSMT and assigned members of that team to take care of the logistics of this project for each faculty member who will be teaching on the conference network.

Computer-Based Training

Bill Buntain made a presentation on a new computer based training program that the Computing Center is licensing for campus-wide use. He distributed a set of presentation slides, an Alliance Consortium Pricing Program, and a CBT Systems Course Listing. Bill explained that what spurred an interest in establishing this license is the training program for Novell certification that the Computing Center provided for some of its people so that they could then train network managers campus-wide. The Computing Center has been looking for an alternative method of training network managers, and this CBT vendor was highly recommended. Bill explained the multiple benefits of leasing the CBT software and reported that the Computing Center has already leased 50 course titles for which he anticipates full reimbursement from the various departments that will participate in the training program. The cost of these courses represents a large savings to the university, over having to send employees to off-site classes for the same training. In addition, there is a web-based component which enables distribution of the courses over the web; as well as a course management utility. What CBT is offering UNT now is a consortium pricing program through the Alliance for Higher Education, which will involve several institutions of higher education in Texas. This will provide an even larger cost-savings for UNT.

In the discussion that followed, a question was raised concerning the cost to UNT in terms of staffing and technology to support this program, as well as a question regarding security procedures with the web-based courses. It was pointed out that the University Library has already received some of the titles and is working on getting them deployed. Bill stated that he will be meeting with the CBT Systems users' group on Oct. 22 to clarify some details and get ideas. A motion was passed, pending development of an administrative plan, stating that the Computing Center should go forward with this project and at the same time study how to best distribute the courseware. After continued discussion, Dr. Poirot amended his motion to state that the Computing Council endorses continuation of discussion about this program, and endorses the implementation of the CBT Systems project, upon satisfactory findings of the Computing Center and others involved. Following a vote on the amended motion, the Chair stated that it is the consensus of the Council that Bill proceed with this project.

Bill asked for input and guidance from the committee as to how to recover the cost of this program as well as how to structure the program and choose the titles. Bill pointed out that the Health Science Center can be included in this, and could provide some of the funding. It was suggested that the Standards & Cooperation Program Group work with Bill to develop a plan for administration of the program; Paul Dworak, Chair of that program group, agreed to have his committee work with Bill. The Chair asked for a progress report at the November IRC meeting and answers to the questions pertaining to staffing and technology costs. The Chair also asked Bill to send out information about

what titles are now available through the Library.

Standards & Cooperation Program Group

Paul Dworak reported that the Standards & Cooperation Program Group drafted a letter for Dr. Brownell to send out to all of the Vice Presidents, concerning the campus-wide computer upgrade project, and which included instructions developed by Jim Curry and Susan Pierce.

Paul also reported that the program group has looked at the Supported Computing Items List and has decided to develop a collection of successful solutions in the work places across campus, and distribute a document that details recommended platforms and applications in place of the current SCIL (Supported Computing Items List). In addition, they would like to develop a list of software that is available through site licenses.

Innovative Projects?

Dennis Mueller asked Dr. Turner the status of the IRC's recommendation on the funding of the Innovative Projects proposal. Dr. Turner reported that nothing has been determined by the IR Steering Committee at this time. Turner said he would bring it up again at the next meeting.

Scurfy Awareness

Richard Harris stated that the security awareness flyers that were sent out recently were an effort to meet minimal state requirements on security awareness training. Human Resources has agreed to add a statement to the Employee Bibliographic Update form in order that every employee has a signed form on file stating that they are aware of the security laws. He told the group that Susan Pierce and Charlotte Russell have developed a training session that they are conducting for all staff and faculty. These training sessions are aimed at increasing employee awareness of the need for computer security. Donna Asher commented that a security awareness document will be included in all the new-hire packets that are given out at the new employee orientation sessions. Paul Dworak stressed that employees really need to understand the concept of computer security, so he recommended that steps be taken to actively inform people. Susan Pierce stated that there is quite a bit of material on the web.

November 18, 1997

Change in Minutes

Virginia Wheelless moved to accept the minutes of the October 21, 1997 meeting, with the following correction:

Page 2, paragraph 5: Delete "for which he anticipates full reimbursement from the various departments that will participate in the training program."

Add "Under the original funding arrangement it was expected that the cost of the software would be fully recovered by a \$150 charge per sequence to the departments for each employee enrolled."

The minutes were approved as corrected.

Distributed Learning Team

The Chair proposed that a member of the newly formed Distributed Learning Team become a member of the IRC. This committee's duty is to look at distributed education in terms of administration, faculty and training issues, as well as the infrastructure. The faculty side has been meeting to resolve some critical issues before courses begin in the Spring. By having a member of that team on the IRC, the Council can stay apprised of what is going on in that arena. This proposal will be voted on at the December meeting.

Desktop Application Software Guidelines

Maurice Leatherbury asked that a draft of Desktop Application Software Guidelines be distributed, in his absence, to be discussed and voted on at the December IRC meeting. Virginia Wheelless asked how this information will be distributed to faculty. She stated that all members of the IRC should share the document with their constituents. Joneel Harris asked that it be distributed electronically as well. Virginia expressed concern about the timeline for the transition to the proposed new desktop software standard. There was some discussion on the possibility of holding another university-wide forum on this issue.

Kelly Wood, a member of the DCSMT, commented that the committee has had quite a bit of discussion on the subject of desktop application software. People seem to have the impression that there is an attempt to do away with WordPerfect 5.1; however, among the heads of distributed computing in the different colleges, there is a strong opinion that whatever their users want is what will be supported. The DCSMT, by way of these guidelines, is trying to establish a new direction toward a newer product that they feel integrates well with the operating system and that will, in the future, most likely be supported by the operating system. The guidelines being presented do not presume to tell the distributed areas which word processing platform they have to use. It is simply trying to set a standard of preference. Logically, the users in each area will communicate their needs and preferences to the heads of the distributed areas.

Joneel pointed out that in the Administration Building, there is no user's group to provide a forum for discussion of these issues. Bill Buntain commented that there have been several attempts to form a user's group in the Admin. Building. Richard Harris commented that most colleges have computer user's groups. More discussion followed.

Dennis Mueller suggested that the Deans be requested to circulate these proposed guidelines to their faculty for their input. The Chair agreed to write a letter to the Deans, listing IRC members, to accompany copies of the guidelines, and ask them to share the document with their faculty and give input on the subject to their IRC representative.

There was some discussion about the timing of the release of these guidelines. It was agreed that if there is no consensus about this issue at the December IRC meeting, the guidelines will not be considered final, and will be presented again at the January meeting.

CBT Systems project

Jenny Jopling reported for the Instruction Program Group, that they have been discussing the CBT Systems project. The committee has met with SLIS, BCIS, CSCI and Art, the potential users of the CBT courseware, and find that they have chosen 345 titles they would like to use. Jenny expressed her concern over one of the titles she previewed, and distributed a document that outlined her objections to the course. Jenny felt that the courses should all be previewed before they are ordered, although there is not enough time to do that before this contract goes into effect, around the end of December. It is not certain whether or not courses can be reviewed before ordering; however, Bill Buntain stated that the company has been pretty flexible about things up to now.

There was some discussion about how the CBT Systems courseware will be funded. Bill pointed out



that if an arrangement can be made with PDI, then the cost could be partially recovered by the fees collected by PDI for courses distributed by them. The Health Science Center is also interested in the courseware, so there could be some cost sharing there. Bill stated that there are a lot of issues regarding funding that still need to be worked through. Bill pointed out that the main advantage to the CBT Systems courseware is the CNE training and Microsoft certification training, which will be provided at a much lower cost than sending people off campus to be trained. The cost of purchasing all the titles that have been requested will be around \$30,000. Richard Harris commented that there is some question about whether HEAF funds can be used. Ginny Anderson stated that she would have to review all the information about the product contract before ruling on whether or not HEAF funds could be used. John Stanton, of the Libraries, commented that the Library is quite interested in this courseware. It was pointed out that this courseware was written for corporations and is reviewed and revised annually, and that CBT Systems is the best provider of this type of courseware on the market today. Neal Tate asserted that this would be a small investment to provide this much needed resource.

There was some discussion about how the courseware will be distributed and managed. John Stanton pointed out that there is an integrated overlay in the product that is set up to manage the software. He also commented that the contract with CBT Systems, negotiated through AHE, will provide for an unlimited number of users, which is a big advantage over the initial contract. Another advantage of this contract is that UNT will be allowed to burn CD's and sell them to users, which is another way of recovering the cost. Bill Buntain stated that UNT already has a server purchased for the purpose, which is housed in the Library.

Neal Tate made a motion to charge the Chair to see that an implementation plan is developed, including financing. The objective should be to make resources available to the greatest number of people in the simplest possible way. Dennis Mueller seconded the motion. There was further discussion on who should develop the plan. The Chair stated that he would take this to the IR Steering Committee. The motion was passed with one abstention.

Innovative Projects?

Dennis Mueller asked about the status of the request for funding of the Innovative Projects program. Dr. Turner reported that as far as he knows there have been two sets of funds established, one for distributed learning grants and one for innovative teaching projects grants \$125,000 in each fund. There is a separate committee doing the selection.

Meeting Adjourned

There were no Program Group reports; and with no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

December 16, 1997

General Access Lab Software?

Dr. Swigger reported having had a problem that she felt needed to be addressed at some level. She has attempted to have some software made available in the general access labs for her students and to do so has had to contact every individual lab manager to request assistance in getting that software installed. The lab managers then referred her to their respective deans for approval. Swigger suggested that she should have been able to contact one central person to accomplish this. Another problem she found was that in the general access labs there were duplicate IP addresses and other technical problems that prevented her software from running. One aspect of the problem is that there

is no information available as to how to accomplish what she wanted to accomplish, such as who to contact, what committee is in charge, etc.

Discussion followed, during which it was pointed out that the General Access Lab Committee would have been the appropriate forum in which to present Dr. Swigger's request. It was also noted that the IRC no longer has a representative from the General Access Lab serving on it, but probably should. It was also pointed out that the Distributed Computing Support Management Team (DCSMT) was established to coordinate distributed support centrally. The Chair suggested that some action needs to be taken, perhaps to have the General Access Committee Chair speak to the IRC regarding these issues. Maurice Leatherbury spoke to the issues Dr. Swigger raised and commented that the way the distributed computing support management team works is that all of the LAN managers work together in a group to resolve issues, but no one is really in authority over them. Paul Dworak suggested that if the bureaucracy is too complex then it needs to be changed. Paul further commented that the Computing Center should sort out what they will do centrally; and a user should be able to go to one person in the Computing Center with a request and have that request carried to the appropriate distributed area or areas.

Bill Buntain explained that the Computing Center has central DNS servers, but the address spaces are sub-allocated to distributed areas for them to manage. It is the responsibility of the network managers to manage the devices in their area within those sub-areas. Bill suggested that the technical problems experienced in Dr. Swigger's report are not an issue of the management of the DNS servers and the registration of devices in that server the problem lies in the configuration of the workstation.

The Chair asked Maurice to take these issues to the DCSMT and report to the IRC, bringing an action item if needed.

Biennial Operating Plan

Susan Pierce presented the Biennial Operating Plan (B.O.P.) for Information Technology for Fiscal Years 1998 and 1999, and distributed a condensed version. The Plan details expenditures in the current biennium, the two prior years, and the two future years. Although the plan shows how much UNT plans to spend, the figures are only an estimate which can be changed at any time.

Paul Schlieve moved that IRC rules be suspended so that approval of the B.O.P. could be brought up for a vote at this meeting, rather than waiting a month to vote on its approval. Ginny Anderson seconded the motion, and it passed. Schlieve also moved for acceptance of the B.O.P; Don Grose seconded, and the motion passed.

Laptop Purchase Plan

Maurice Leatherbury reported for the DCSMT that the laptop purchase plan is progressing. Four vendors have been sent a Request for Offer on five different brands of laptops, with response requested by January 23, 1998. It is hoped that by late February or early March the plan will be in place. The plan is to provide one or two standard models of laptops and maintenance for those through the Microcomputer Maintenance Shop, except for IBM who will not allow UNT to provide its own support. The other brands that have been evaluated are Dell, Acer, Toshiba and Compaq.

Desktop Application Software Guidelines

Maurice also presented the Desktop Application Software Guidelines, which were distributed at the November meeting. The DCSMT had several lengthy discussions about the guidelines which recommend adoption of the Microsoft Office Suite for a desktop standard, while at the same time allowing distributed areas to use and support other word processing and spreadsheet products if their



users want them. Maurice pointed out that by the middle of next year, Microsoft will be the preferred software for sharing of word processing files across campus, and will receive the highest level of support. WordPerfect 6.0 will continue to be installed and supported across campus as long as it is needed.

Virginia Wheelless objected to a vote on these guidelines until all local area network managers have had time to consult with their users. Further discussion followed, in which it was noted that the upgrade to GroupWise 5.2 will be phased in, with the Computing Center being the first to upgrade in January. It was agreed that there would be no harm done by tabling a vote on the guidelines until a later meeting. Wheelless made a motion to table the vote on these guidelines; Dennis Mueller seconded. Paul Dworak commented that if there is an area where communication is not taking place between users and network managers, area supervisors need to deal with that situation as a personnel issue, and this should not hold up a vote on the guidelines. Dworak stated that if the motion were amended to include a deadline, he would not object, so Virginia and Dennis accepted a friendly amendment adding the time limit of the February IRC meeting for communication between LAN managers and users to have taken place. The amended motion passed.

Distributed Learning Team Representation?

The Chair called for a vote on possible representation on the IRC from the Distributed Learning Team (DLT). He explained that the DLT is a group of UNT staff who have something to do with supporting faculty in the development of distributed learning courses. Mike Kozak moved approval of IRC representation from the DLT; Ginny Anderson seconded and the motion passed.

Instruction Program Group

Jenny Jopling reported that the Instruction Program Group has met with Jim Curry concerning his new classroom support services division. They are working on a classroom access policy. They recommend that any request for renovation or new construction of classrooms be routed through Jim Curry so that he is aware of all construction activity in classrooms. Discussion followed, during which it was suggested that Jenny visit with Ray McFarlane before any new procedure is started. Joneel suggested that when classroom scheduling is concerned that David Kesterson be included in the loop. Paul Dworak suggested that some sort of planning and reporting process should be put in place, headed by Dr. Kesterson with information passed on to Jim Curry. This seemed to be the consensus of the group.

CBT System Software

Jenny continued by bringing up the subject of the CBT System Software contract, and deferred to Bill Buntain to discuss it. Bill explained that the AHE contract was supposed to have been put in place by the end of November, but they extended it for one month. It is to UNT's advantage to be included on the AHE contract because it will give UNT a much larger number of titles to use, and will provide a large savings in training costs. At the present time, the contract is being reviewed by the University Attorney. Bill Buntain will be the point of contact for assistance in using these training courses, and he will work with the Instruction Group on the details.

Communications Program Group

Bill also reported that the Communications Program Group would meet and visit with GTE at their DFW Airport Technical Solutions Center for a presentation of emerging communications technologies on December 18th. Bill expressed a need for additional members for that program group and asked that the IRC Chair send out a letter asking for nominations from the various academic areas' computing committees. The Chair agreed to do that.

Bill also reported on the directory services initiative and stated that he anticipates bringing a final report to the Council in January.

Standards & Cooperation Program Group

Paul Dworak reported for the Standards & Cooperation Program Group that the procedure for the campus-wide workstation upgrade is in place and Jim Curry has been contacting individual departments personally. The committee is looking at the role of the program group and has decided to try to provide information centrally on suites of applications that work together successfully on the various platforms. This was proposed to the DCSMT and approved; Paul intends to present the idea to the LAN managers, as well. They intend to develop a list of software site licenses available on campus, as well as a list of frequently asked questions and their answers. Another idea they had was to create a flow chart of Computing Center operations to facilitate communication. They are open to doing whatever would be useful to the campus to enhance cooperations and standards.

Research Program Group

Dennis Mueller reported for the Research Program Group that they met and would like to recommend that the word "innovative" be removed from the title of the Teaching With Technology Grants, so that those grants will not be confused with the Innovative Projects grants, which were not funded.

Maurice Leatherbury explained that \$250,000 was given to Teaching With Technology grants this year, divided into two categories, with one category being for distributed learning projects and the other category being open to any innovative teaching project.

The Chair explained that a form was sent to the Provost, putting forward the recommendation to fund Innovative Projects, and was returned to the IRC with the response that Innovative Projects would be placed on the list of items to be considered for funding.

The Chair stated that he and Maurice would discuss a way to correct the communication.

Administrative Program Group

Joneel Harris reported that the Administrative Program Group met and discussed the CBT Proposal and the desktop standards guidelines. She stated that Financial Aid is interested in the authoring tool product that is offered by CBT Systems. Joneel also commended Susan Pierce for her work on the Biennial Operating Plan.

Meeting Adjourned

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

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Staff Activities

We haven't printed any staff news in quite some time. This article should get you caught up with employee transitions, publications, awards, etc.

Transitions

The following are new employees:

- **Amy Boyd**, part-time General Access Lab Monitor. Began work on 9/1/97.
- **Stuart Christian**, began work 10/17/97.
- **Wil Clark**, began work in Academic Computing Services 12/22/97. Wil introduces himself in the article, ["This Space for Sale or Rent"](#)
- **Daren Dugan**, began work 11/10/97.
- **Patrick Evans**, began work 12/1/97.
- **Phillip Graham**, part-time Report Distribution clerk. Began work 9/1/97.
- **Eric Helmer**, began work on the Voice Response Team 10/27/97.
- **Ben Ho Isbendy**, part-time computer operations employee. Began work 9/24/97.
- **Bhavani Jampala**, part-time computer operations employee. Began work 9/24/97.
- **Lynea Laws**, part-time Helpdesk employee. Began work 10/15/97.
- **Stacie Luna**, part-time Computer Support Assistant. Began work 10/24/97.
- **Sharon Marek**, became full-time in Academic Computing Services 9/15/97.
- **Kenn Moffitt**, began work on 11/01/97.
- **Amy Moreland**, part-time General Access Lab Monitor. Began work on 9/1/97.
- **Michael Noblitt**, part-time General Access Lab Monitor. Began work on 9/1/97.
- **Virginia Richards**, programmer on the Student Record's Data Systems team began work in May, 1997.
- **Stanley Sawyer**, began work on 11/24/97. He retired from here once but couldn't resist the lure of working on the Year 2000 problem.
- **Mike Shirley**, began work 11/1/97.
- **Gwen Watenpugh**, part-time Help Desk employee. Began work on 9/1/97.
- **Sandra Walsh**, began work 12/22/97.
- **Brandon Wilkerson**, part-time General Access Lab Monitor. Began work on 9/1/97.
- **Bertha Williams**, became full-time in Data Entry on 9/29/97.
-
- **Sabine Winter**, part-time General Access Lab Monitor. Began work on 9/1/97.

The following people are no longer working in the Computing Center:

- **Michael Graham**, left 1/31/97
- **Shauna Graham**, left 1/31/97
- **Richard Madrid**, left 11/14/97
- **Eriq Neale**, left 10/31/97.
- **Ovee Rahman**, left 11/30/97
- **Kenneth Strmiska**, left 11/09/97
- **Susan Pierce**, left 12/21/97. Susan is now employed in the Microcomputer Maintenance Shop on campus.
- **William Wagers**, left 1/7/98

Other transitions within the Computing Center include:

- **Dr. Philip Baczewski** was promoted from Assistant Director of Academic Computing Services

to Associate Director of Academic Computing as of 10/9/97.

- **Sandy Burke**, who many know from the computer training she does across campus, has taken the position of Support Services Coordinator in Academic Computing.
- **Chris Strauss**, who had held the position of Support Services Coordinator, has moved into a new position, Computing Systems Support Database Administrator. The position is still within Academic Computing Services and is involved with the implementation, management and support of the Remedy call tracking system.
- **Charlotte Russell**, who was a Computing Center Administrative Assistant, has taken a newly created position (as of August, 1997) involving Security Awareness and Administration.
- **Rebecca Padia**, who was an employee in the Data Entry department, has taken Russell's vacated Administrative Assistant Position.

Awards

- **Mike Wright**, Network and Microcomputer Services, was presented with an award for 5 years of service to UNT in December, 1997.
- **Bruce Pollock**, Network and Microcomputer Services, was presented with an award for 5 years of service to UNT in November, 1997.
- **Virginia Kennedy**, Student Records Data Systems Team, was presented with an award for 5 years of service to UNT in September, 1997.
- **Ginger Boone**, Network and Microcomputer, was honored as a Soaring Eagle - someone who goes "the extra mile" - in the August 1997 issue of the *Human Resources Newsletter*.
- **Dr. Maurice Leatherbury**, Director of Academic Computing Services, was honored as a Soaring Eagle - someone who goes "the extra mile" - in the June/July 1997 issue of the *Human Resources Newsletter*.

Publications, Presentations

- **Rich Herrington**, Academic Computing Services Research and Statistical Consultant and Psychology graduate student, has co-authored a paper that will be presented at the Seventh Cognitive Aging Conference in Atlanta, Georgia in April. The paper is titled "Priming Effects, Age, and Depression in Adulthood" and is co-written with Dr. Bert Hayslip of the UNT Psychology faculty, R. Sanders, A.M. Girondi, and K. Hassmiller, all of the University of Akron Psychology Department.
Herrington presented two papers at the Seventh Annual Conference of The Society for Chaos Theory in Psychology and the Life Sciences at Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin August 1, 1997. The Papers were co-written with Kevin Kennelly and T. Michael Baggett of the UNT Psychology faculty. They are titled "Scaling Phenomenon with Heterogeneous Collections of Power Functions" and "Reordering Phenomenon and the Power Law of Practice". Herrington is first author of the former.
- **Mark Wilcox**, UNT Web Administrator, participated in a panel discussion at the fall AMIGOS conference in San Antonio in November, 1997. AMIGOS is a library consortium. Wilcox was the only practicing "Webmaster" speaking. Others on the panel were the editor of www.searchenginewatch.com, the Chief Technical Officer for Excite.com, and the Director of Research for OCLC (the world's largest library catalog consortium).
- **Karl Ho**, Manager of Research and Statistical Support Services in Academic Computing Services, attended the American Political Association annual conference in Washington D.C. 8/27-8/30/97. While there, Dr. Ho received the Samuel H. Beer Award for the Best Dissertation in British Politics.



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CD-ROM to go on Sale

By [Dr. Ty Young](#), Academic Computing Services (tyoung@unt.edu)

A new version of the Internet dial-up software, "UNT Internet Dial-up Software 2.0" is scheduled for release by February 15. As an added bonus, the new multi-platform CD-ROM (for Windows 3.1, Windows 95, and MacOS) will include complete Internet training software from CBT Systems, a leader in the Computer-Based Training software industry, for Windows 3.1 and Windows 95.

The software includes everything that the UNT Internet Services Committee (a committee internal to the Computing Center) believes to be useful for most users. We've licensed [Netscape](#) Communicator 4.03 Internet Access Edition from Netscape Communications, Inc., to which we've added "UNT Specific" customizations, and we've also included installers for E-mail, virus detection, FTP, Usenet newsreader, archiving, and terminal emulation software. Diskette and downloadable versions of the software are not planned, due to the CD-ROM's 300 megabyte size.

An especially useful feature of the software for Windows users is the ability to run the Internet training software included on the CD-ROM. Even the most novice users can easily progress through the training software, which will run on either Windows platform. Each of the ten subject areas contain five or six sections of training material, and can be accessed independently of the other. Users of the software will be able to go to through a couple of the sections and continue where they left off days or even weeks later. It should be very helpful for the UNT community.

The CD-ROM, when it is available, will be sold in the UNT Bookstore's Tradebooks and Software Area, inside the University Union. The suggested retail price for the CD-ROM is \$10.00.

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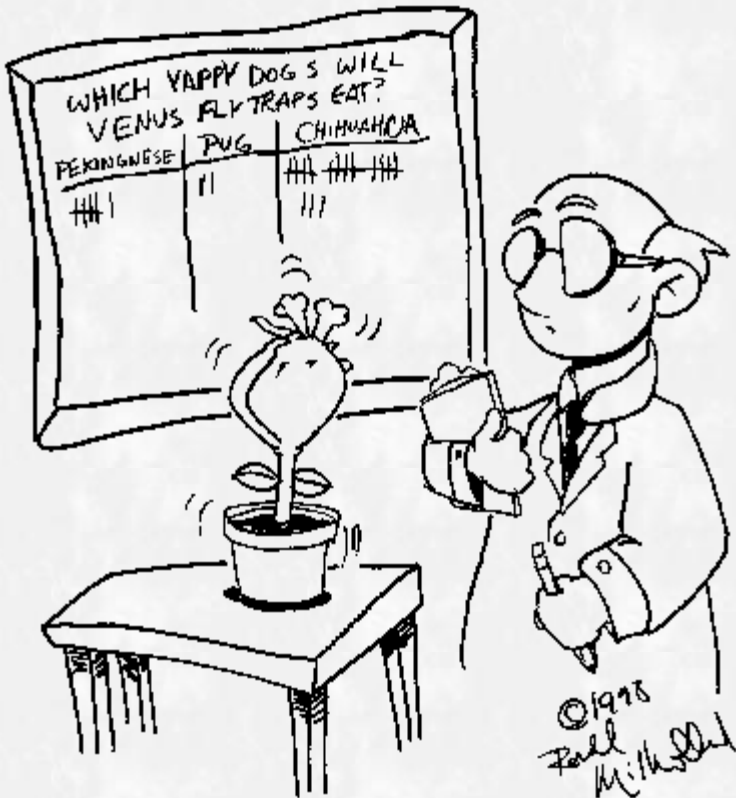


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By [Randy Milholland](mailto:randy@unt.edu) (randy@unt.edu)



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